

## **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

### **Response to Claim Objection**

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 4 as a multiple dependent claim. In response claim 4 has been amended to depend only from claim 1.

### **Response to Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102**

In the Office Action the Examiner rejected claims 1, 4, and 5 under 35 USC 102 (e) as being anticipated by Lashinski et al (US Patent 6,071,296). The Lashinski patent, however, does not describe or suggest a second end ring segment having a continuous circumferential section, as required by the amended claims, which is radially thicker than at an intermediate location. The Lashinski patent discloses a stent having a distal end portion with a thick portion which is non-continuous (Figure 5A and Figure 6).

The examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6 and 7 under 102 (e) as being anticipated by Alt (US Patent 5,824, 045). The Alt et al patent, however, does not describe or suggest a second end ring segment having a continuous circumferential section with a radial thickness greater than the continuous ring of an intermediate ring segment. Amended claim 1 and new claim 8 are directed to a prosthesis having a continuous circumferential section surrounding the second end ring segment which is not taught by the Alt patent, therefore these claims should be allowable. All subsequent claims depend on claim 8 and should likewise be allowable.

Support for the amendment to claim 1 and new claims 8-13 can generally be found throughout the specification and particularly on page 22 lines 22-34 and page 23 lines 1-2 and Figures 1, 2, 11, and 13 when taken in conjunction with Figure 22A.

## **CONCLUSION**

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

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Amdt. dated January 14, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of July 25, 2003

PATENT

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 650-326-2400.

Respectfully submitted,

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